



News Release

WISCONSIN ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hurricane Update

Wisconsin Guard troops safe as Hurricane Katrina passes Camp Shelby, Miss.

About 1,000 Wisconsin Army National Guard soldiers safely weathered the brunt of Hurricane Katrina's force Monday afternoon, according to senior officers in each of the Guard's two battalions training at Camp Shelby, Miss. At 3:45 p.m. winds had subsided from earlier reported wind speeds that approached 90 miles per hour.

Wisconsin National Guard officials in Madison remained in contact with Camp Shelby and the state's two battalions during the day.

The Wisconsin soldiers lost power shortly before 11 a.m. and landline telephone service was interrupted just after 11:00. Cell phone service to Wisconsin was intermittent during the course of the day, but cell phones worked well enough for the Guard's state headquarters to check in with the Camp Shelby troops almost hourly.

Wisconsin Guard soldiers at Camp Shelby reported that the approaching storm's strength picked up at around noon, peaked at about 1:30 p.m., then slowly began to subside.

While the storm was at top strength, soldiers reported high winds, driving rain and considerable debris blowing past their concrete block barracks buildings. The soldiers were ordered to stay inside the hurricane-resistant structures to avoid being injured by debris, falling trees or fallen power lines.

At 4 p.m. Monday, both battalions report that all their soldiers are safe and well and no injuries to Wisconsin soldiers were reported.

Some of the soldiers were reported to be appreciating a little "down time" after training for long days since arriving at the southern Mississippi mobilization center earlier this month.

Although the advancing side of Hurricane Katrina has now passed Camp Shelby, the Wisconsin soldiers now face the storm's lengthy retreat to the north, as winds and rain are expected to increase into the night. The Wisconsin troops expect an "all clear" will not be issued at Camp Shelby until first light on Tuesday.

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